UNITED NATIONS **A**

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/51/295
16 August 1996

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Fifty-first session
Items 10, 25, 37, 96, 98, 99 and 104
of the provisional agenda*

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE WORK OF THE ORGANIZATION

COOPERATION BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY

THE SITUATION OF DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN HAITI

MACROECONOMIC POLICY QUESTIONS

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION

ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

INTERNATIONAL DRUG CONTROL

Letter dated 12 August 1996 from the Permanent Representative of Antigua and Barbuda to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith, from the Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community, the Communiqué which was issued at the conclusion of the seventeenth meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), which was held at Bridgetown from 3 to 6 July 1996 (see annex), and to request that it be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under items 10, 25, 37, 96, 98, 99 and 104 of the provisional agenda.

(Signed) Patrick Albert LEWIS
Permanent Representative

* A/51/150.

ANNEX

Communiqué of the seventeenth meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community, held at Bridgetown from 3 to 7 July 1996

Heads of Government in attendance were: Mr. Lester Bird, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Antigua and Barbuda; Mr. Owen Arthur, Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs, Barbados; Mr. Hubert Ingraham, Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas; Mr. Manuel Esquivel, Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and Economic Development, Belize; Mr. Edison James, Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs, Legal Affairs and Labour, Commonwealth of Dominica; Mr. Keith Mitchell, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Grenada; Mr. Cheddi Jagan, President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana; Mr. Percival J. Patterson, Prime Minister and Minister of Defence, Jamaica; Mr. Reuben Meade, Chief Minister of Montserrat; Mr. Denzil Douglas, Prime Minister of Saint Kitts and Nevis; Mr. Vaughan Lewis, Prime Minister of Saint Lucia; Sir James Mitchell, Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines; and Mr. Basdeo Panday, Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. The Head of Government of the Republic of Suriname, Mr. Runaldo R. Venetiaan, was represented by Mr. Jules Ajodha, Vice-President.

Heads of Government of the Associate States of the Community in attendance were: Mr. Ralph T. O'Neal, Chief Minister of the British Virgin Islands and Mr. Derek Taylor, Chief Minister of the Turks and Caicos Islands.

Heads of international organizations present at the Conference were: Chief Emeka Anyaoku, Secretary-General of the Commonwealth; Mr. César Gaviria, Secretary-General of the Organization of American States; Mr. Jacques Diouf, Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; Mr. Simón Molina Duarte, Secretary-General of the Association of Caribbean States and Mr. Carlos Moneta, Permanent Secretary of the Latin American Economic System (SELA).

Mr. Derek Hanekom, Minister of Agriculture and Land Affairs of the Republic of South Africa, represented President Nelson Mandela, and Ambassador Joseph Verner Reed represented the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali.

Messages were received from the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Governments of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Dominican Republic, Japan, the Republic of Costa Rica, the Republic of India and the Republic of Venezuela.

Mr. Woen Arthur, Prime Minister of Barbados and host Prime Minister, addressed the opening ceremony, warmly welcoming his colleague heads of Government and challenging the Conference "to redefine and refocus the everlasting interests of the Caribbean region in our dealings with the international community".

Mr. Cheddi Jagan, President of Guyana and outgoing Chairman of the Conference, urged the continuation of the region's quest for relief from the debt burden; the Community's continued advocacy of a regional development fund within the framework of the free trade area of the Americas; the pursuance of the fight to ensure an acceptable resolution of the banana issue; and the endorsement of the new global human order as an all-encompassing mechanism to secure the Community's future prosperity.

Mr. Lester Bird, Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda and current Chairman of the Conference, delivered the feature address in which he forwarded the position that the "need to return to the concept of a Caribbean commission as proposed by the West Indian Commission ... The work of such a commission would greatly enhance the decision-making process in CARICOM and considerably aid heads of Government to focus on issues which require their specific attention to move the integration movement forward, and by doing so, improve the prospect of a better life for the Caribbean people".

The opening ceremony was also addressed by the newest member of the Conference, Mr. Vaughan Lewis, Prime Minister of Saint Lucia. Mr. Lewis voiced the opinion that "Free trade has become the central theme of international economic relations, and in the rush to give market forces the freest rein possible, traditional alliances and friendships sometimes appear to have fallen by the wayside. The continuing diplomatic assault on the arrangements under which Saint Lucia and other Caribbean countries market their bananas in the European Union is a case in point".

In his statement, the Secretary-General of the Caribbean Community, Mr. Edwin W. Carrington, stressed that "we as small countries now need to muster all our resources of speed and tactical skill to hold our own" in the race to secure a place in the twenty-first century. "To do so, however, the regional body politic must increasingly move in unison and be honed to the highest possible degree of uniformity".

The heads of Government conferred the Community's triennial Award for Women on Mrs. Lucille Mathurin-Mair, a national of Jamaica, for her lifetime of selfless and dedicated service as a scholar, diplomat, international public servant and activist for women's rights.

The global context

The heads of Government were acutely aware that their meeting was taking place against the backdrop of an international environment which presented an ever-increasing number of complex challenges. It was therefore imperative for the region to devise a qualitatively different approach to international economic and political issues and to develop a more effective decision-making capacity in order to promote its prosperity. This new approach would need to recognize that as a result of globalization, production units and capital traversed the globe in response only to market forces. In addition the intensification of regionalism had given rise to the establishment of huge trading blocs as nations, both in keeping with the economic globalization process and also in defence against it, seek to integrate their economies on a

scale hitherto unknown. The communications revolution had been an important factor in the dramatic and rapid transformation of the structure of the world economy. Against this background, they considered and agreed to the following:

Agricultural development

The heads of Government, in a special session dedicated to agriculture, agreed to a new vision for agriculture into the twenty-first century. This vision focuses on agriculture as a business and addresses the requisites for transforming the sector to make it more internationally competitive, with the capability of improving the income of the farming community and contributing to strengthened food and nutrition security. A comprehensive review of the sector identified its importance to the economies of the region, its strengths and weaknesses, particularly in the context of the threats and challenges of the changing hemispheric and global environment, and opportunities for growth and development.

The heads of Government accepted that it was critical to create an environment which would encourage private sector investment in agriculture and promote national initiatives for the transformation of the sector, with support from regional level programmes. Among the areas of focus at the national level would be the strengthening of producer/marketer organizations, promotion of production, provision of drainage and irrigation, improvement in marketing systems and associated infrastructure, the promotion of agro-processing, the control of praedial larceny and refinements in land tenure policy and regulations. Complementary regional action would be in areas of policy formulation support, human capital development, with an emphasis on entrepreneurial skills at various levels, research and technology generation focused on greater productivity, marketing and agri-business facilitation, water resource management and institutional support. The continued development of the fisheries and forestry sectors, which are based on renewable natural resources, will be underpinned by conservation of the environment and cooperation among member States as well as neighbouring States.

The heads of Government identified the financing of developmental activities in agriculture as warranting special attention. They recognized that innovative solutions would be required. In this regard, they accepted the offer of the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) to examine the needs and proffer recommendations to the Conference on this critical issue.

In view of the importance of agriculture to the region, the heads of Government agreed that the mechanism established for implementation would begin its work immediately and report to Ministers of Agriculture within six months. Heads of Government will keep this sector under continuous review, and it was mandated that a progress report be submitted to the Conference at its Eighth Inter-Sessional Meeting.

Issues relating to the marketing of CARICOM bananas

The heads of Government expressed strong concern over the state of the Caribbean banana industry, given the continuing threat to its sustainability

deriving from actions by the United States of America, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico and certain European countries. They agreed to intensify their efforts to increase the level of awareness on the part of these countries of the extremely vital importance of the banana industry to the economic and social well-being of the countries of the Caribbean. These efforts will include taking full advantage of a special meeting of the countries of Central America and the Caribbean on bananas, to be convened in Belize in October 1996, to seek an agreed understanding between the Caribbean and Central America on this matter. This meeting is being convened on the initiative of Mr. Oscar Arias, former President of Costa Rica.

The heads of Government further expressed concern at the decision of the Banana Management Committee of the European Union to increase the "dollar quota" for the last quarter of 1996 from 2,200,000 to 2,553,000 tonnes; and called upon the Union to take measures to address the current over-supply of bananas on the European market.

The heads of Government acknowledged the exchange of correspondence between Prime Minister Patterson, on behalf of CARICOM, and President Clinton of the United States of America, and expressed their willingness to meet at any time with any country or group of countries in order to seek a resolution to the dispute over the European banana market. They also agreed to continue to work towards diversification within the banana industry including the introduction of new products.

Single market and economy

The heads of Government expressed their appreciation for the work undertaken at the special consultations, coordinated by Prime Minister Owen Arthur of Barbados, to refocus the activities for the establishment of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME). They endorsed the recommendations emanating from these consultations and, among them, a recommendation to allow artists, musicians, sportsmen and media personnel to move and work throughout the region. This recommendation is in addition to the provisions for the free movement of university graduates in respect of whom legislation has already been implemented by six member States - Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica and Saint Lucia. Trinidad and Tobago has recently introduced a bill to this effect. In the case of Guyana this legislation coexists with previous legislation which allows for the free movement of several other categories of persons. Antigua and Barbuda indicated its intention to introduce legislation shortly.

The heads of Government expressed satisfaction at the progress which has been made with respect to the implementation of Phase II of the Common External Tariff (CET), which would take the CET to 0-25 per cent. They sympathized with the difficulties of Antigua and Barbuda in meeting the deadline for the implementation of Phase II as Hurricanes Marilyn and Luis had severely depleted the resources of that country. Antigua and Barbuda will now implement Phase III of the CET in April 1997. Saint Lucia has undertaken to implement Phase II by August 1996.

The heads of Government noted that significant progress had been made in the elimination of non-tariff barriers to intraregional trade and that member States had made a determined effort to discontinue the use of negative lists, licensing, quantitative restrictions and discriminatory internal taxes. Heads of Government decided that all remaining non-tariff barriers to intraregional trade will be eliminated December 1996.

The heads of Government agreed that the Ministers of Finance, the Central Bank Governors and heads of planning agencies, should meet more frequently to deal with single market issues. They approved a plan proposed by the Council of Central Bank Governors to address the issues of currency convertibility and greater macroeconomic convergence of the economies of CARICOM. Addressing these two problems would improve the conditions for the free movement of capital, integration of capital markets and monetary union. Progress in these areas has been slowed because of the multiplicity of currencies and the exchange rate regimes within the community.

The heads of Government agreed to establish a Council for Finance and Planning in order to give focused attention to matters relating to capital markets and financial integration within the CSME. They welcomed the signing by the Prime Minister of Saint Kitts and Nevis of the CARICOM Agreement on Social Security, during the course of the Conference.

Caribbean Investment Fund

The heads of Government received with satisfaction the report of the Chairman of the ICWI Group of Companies Ltd., who advised that conditions appeared to be propitious for launching the Caribbean Investment Fund (CIF). They agreed to modify the original agreement to permit the fund to invest a part of its resources in countries of the wider region of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS). The ICWI Group plans to raise US$ 50 million as initial capital for the Fund over the next year. The original agreement for the establishment of the Caribbean Investment Fund was signed by heads of Government and the Chairman of the ICWI Group in Trinidad and Tobago in October 1993.

The objective of CIF is to mobilize foreign currency from extraregional capital markets for investment in new ventures or in existing enterprises in the region. The heads of State welcomed the signing by a number of member States of the supplemental agreement to the agreement establishing the Caribbean Investment Fund during the course of the Conference.

Insurance and reinsurance

The heads of Government adopted a package of recommendations aimed at reducing the vulnerability of the region to the impact of natural occurrences, improving and expanding the region's risk acceptance capacity, the development of strong and effective insurance regulation and regulatory capacity, and at strengthening the institutional base for national disaster mitigation, forecasting and assessment. They expressed their deep appreciation to Mr. Dennis Lalor, Chairman of the ICWI Group of Companies Ltd. and to the

working group which had developed these proposals, and commended the recommendations to the insurance industry in the region. They mandated the CARICOM secretariat to explore the possibility of obtaining assistance from multilateral agencies to facilitate the implementation of the recommendations.

Promoting the Community's external trade relations

The heads of Government recognized that over the next few years the region will be engaged in concurrent negotiations on the free trade area of the Americas, its future relationship with the European Union as well as trade and economic agreements with countries and groups of countries in the hemisphere. It will also have to deal with the fulfilment of its obligations under the World Trade Organization (WTO), including a new round of global negotiations and an increasing number of problems such as the threat to preferential trade arrangements which it now enjoys. They also recognized that these processes were not only comprehensive and diverse, but highly interrelated and will need to be synchronized and coordinated. They observed that limited human and financial resources imposed constraints on the region's ability to effectively prepare for and participate in these negotiations.

Discussions with the social partners

The heads of Government held discussions with the social partners - the private sector, labour and the non-governmental organizations. They agreed that it was essential to maintain fluid lines of communication and consultation with these partners particularly with regard to their involvement in negotiation processes.

Regional Air Transportation

The heads of Government welcomed the signing by a number of member States of the Multilateral Air Services Agreement during the course of the Conference. They noted however the concerns expressed over recent developments in the air transportation sector and agreed that the secretariat would make arrangements for a comprehensive study of the needs, realities and prospects of the sector. The objective of the study would be the rationalization of air transportation in the region and the preparation of a strategic plan of options for its development. The study would also pay particular attention to air transportation in the eastern and south-eastern Caribbean and consider the effects on the region of the deregulation of air transportation occurring internationally and extending into the metropolitan jurisdictions in the region.

Charter of civil society

The heads of Government reaffirmed their commitment to a charter of civil society and noted the progress that had been made in its drafting. They mandated the Attorneys-General and Ministers of Legal Affairs to meet as early

as possible to refine the draft charter in order to permit its signing at the next inter-sessional meeting of the Conference.

Protocol amending the structure of the Community's institutions and operations

The heads of Government considered the draft protocol intended to revise the organizational structure, institutional arrangements and voting procedures of the Community with a view to expediting decision-making and implementation. They agreed on the need for further examination of the proposals. They therefore mandated their Attorneys-General and Ministers responsible for Legal Affairs to examine the technical aspects of the protocol with a view to finalizing it for signature at the next inter-sessional meeting of the Conference.

Caribbean Commission

The heads of Government, in considering the strengthening of the decision-making machinery of CARICOM, took note of the undertaking by the Governments of Antigua and Barbuda and Trinidad and Tobago to jointly prepare a paper on the establishment of a Caribbean Commission along the lines suggested by the West Indian Commission, for consideration by heads of Government at their next inter-sessional meeting.

Assembly of Caribbean Community Parliamentarians

The heads of Government welcomed with satisfaction the convening of the inaugural meeting of the Assembly of Caribbean Community Parliamentarians (ACCP), which was held in Barbados on 27 May 1996. They also welcomed the fact that the Governments of Montserrat and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines had signed, during the course of the Conference, the Agreement for the establishment of an Assembly of Caribbean Community Parliamentarians.

Belize/Guatemala relations

The heads of Government expressed their appreciation for the continued cordial relations between Belize and Guatemala. They reaffirmed their full support for the sovereignty of Belize and for the preservation of Belize's territorial integrity. They further expressed the hope for the early resumption of discussions between Belize and Guatemala that could lead to a treaty recognizing Belize's existing and constitutional land and sea boundaries.

Guyana/Venezuela relations

The heads of Government noted the status of Guyana/Venezuela relations and expressed their support for the McIntyre process, under the auspices of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, as the mechanism for peacefully

resolving the border controversy. They also reaffirmed their strong support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Guyana.

Situation in Montserrat

The heads of Government pledged the Community's continuing support for the Government and people of Montserrat and urged the positive response of the people of the Community to assisting the Government and people of Montserrat, particularly in the areas of health and agriculture. They noted with concern the escalating difficulties being experienced by the Government and people of Montserrat in the face of volcanic activity in that country.

They expressed their satisfaction with the coordinating role played by the Caribbean Emergency Disaster Response Agency (CDERA) in channelling the region's assistance to Montserrat. They noted the efforts so far undertaken by the CARICOM secretariat to coordinate the provision of additional medical personnel. They also noted the urgent need for prefabricated housing units in Montserrat and welcomed the assistance being provided by the CDB in this area. They further noted the efforts of the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI) to coordinate activities geared at providing technical support to the agricultural sector, particularly for irrigation systems.

The heads of Government agreed to allow the free movement of Montserratians within their respective countries irrespective of qualification and without the need for work permits in the CARICOM region, and noted that the Government of Montserrat would be approaching individual member States on a bilateral basis in regard to specific areas of assistance. They requested the Chief Minister to extend to the people of Montserrat the assurances of the region's solidarity with them at this critical and difficult time.

Saint Kitts and Nevis

The heads of Government expressed their deep concern over developments in Saint Kitts and Nevis regarding the announcement by the Premier of Nevis that steps are being taken to separate Nevis from Saint Kitts and Nevis. The heads of Government were troubled by the possible fragmentation of Saint Kitts and Nevis and were equally concerned about its effect upon CARICOM as a whole.

The heads of Government urged that the constitutional process be respected and followed by all parties; and further urged that all parties remain open to efforts to reconcile their differences in the interest of the peoples of Saint Kitts and Nevis and of CARICOM as a whole. In this connection, they mandated Mr. Lester Bird, Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, as Chairman of the Conference to continue his efforts to mediate between the parties with a view to finding a mutually satisfactory solution to the current impasse.

The heads of Government also authorized their Chairman to co-opt such assistance as he may require to carry out the mandate, and to pursue with the Commonwealth secretariat its offer to provide such assistance as may be required.

Development of West Indies cricket

The heads of Government received a report from the Chairman of the Subcommittee on the Development of West Indies Cricket which the Conference had established at its seventh inter-sessional meeting. They were encouraged by the new direction and thrust of the current administration of the West Indies Cricket Board, and pledged further and deeper consultation with the Board at the earliest opportunity in order to agree on measures which member States might take to re-establish West Indian cricket supremacy.

Developments regarding the University of the West Indies

The heads of Government received with satisfaction a progress report on the new system of governance devised by the University of the West Indies to focus teaching and research on the development needs of the region and which at the same time endeavours to increase the cost-effectiveness of the University's operations. They endorsed the Vice Chancellor's proposal for the Conference to meet in special session to review the human resource requirements of the region at their eighteenth meeting. They agreed to request that the University Council grant an extension of Sir Alister McIntyre's tenure as Vice Chancellor. They further agreed to support fully the fiftieth anniversary celebrations of the University of the West Indies in 1998.

Relations with South Africa

The heads of Government welcomed the presence at their meeting of Mr. Derek A. Hanekom, Minister of Agriculture and Land Affairs of South Africa and special envoy of the President of South Africa, Mr. Nelson Mandela. They conveyed the Community's proposal to dispatch a Ministerial Trade and Investment Mission to South Africa at a mutually convenient date in 1997 and also to establish a joint CARICOM Diplomatic Mission in South Africa in the near future to advance economic, technical and cultural relations with the countries of southern Africa and with the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

The Gambia

The heads of Government received a report from the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth on the situation in the Gambia, as well as agreements reached by the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG) at their meeting on 24 to 25 June 1996 on that situation. They were also informed by the Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines concerning initiatives being undertaken by himself in consultation with the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth with regard to assisting the Government of the Gambia in the restoration of democracy. They welcomed these initiatives and expressed the hope that they would result in the development of a constitutional framework befitting the democratic process in the Gambia.

Sierra Leone

The heads of Government took note of the report of the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth on the stabilization of the situation in Sierra Leone and welcomed the assistance being given by a CARICOM member State in the attachment of Justice Ulric Cross of Trinidad and Tobago as a conciliator in the process.

Nigeria

The heads of Government heard from the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth on developments in Nigeria and the recent meeting of the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group. They took note of the report of the United Nations fact-finding mission to Nigeria. They also noted that consequent to that report, the military regime in Nigeria had adopted certain measures in response to the concerns expressed therein. They stressed however their concern over the persistence of human rights violations by the military regime in that country. It was agreed that many fundamental changes remained to be made by the Nigerian authorities if the imposition of sanctions is to be avoided. They reaffirmed their commitment to the decisions adopted at the Auckland Commonwealth heads of Government meeting concerning the imposition of "soft sanctions" against Nigeria and agreed to join Jamaica and Canada in the imposition of sanctions if appropriate reforms were not introduced in the near future.

Haiti

The heads of Government considered developments in Haiti and the region's relations with that country. They welcomed the decision of the Security Council of the United Nations to maintain a United Nations support mission in Haiti in the light of the security requirements of the country. They reiterated their call to the international community to assist Haiti in its economic and social reconstruction, particularly through the provision of human and financial resources. They expressed the continued support of the region for the strengthening of democratic governance in Haiti. In this regard, they noted a report by the Prime Minister of Jamaica on the working visit recently paid by the President of Haiti to his country and endorsed the recommendation of the Standing Committee of Ministers responsible for Foreign Affairs (SCMFA) that the CARICOM-Haiti Joint Commission be convened as early as possible in order to further the development of relations between Haiti and the Community and to maintain dialogue with the new administration.

Illicit traffic in drugs

The heads of Government noted that the Caribbean is being increasingly used for the transshipment of illegal drugs from the major production centres to the major centres of consumption. They took note of the increased boldness of drug traffickers in the waters and the airspace of Community member States. CARICOM States are, as a consequence, paying a heavy price as a result of the trade in and abuse of illegal drugs. They noted that the problem posed a major threat to

the political, social and economic stability of the region and is a major factor affecting governance in the region. They reaffirmed their commitment to an integrated and coordinated approach among the member States and also the various organizations and agencies to deal with the problem.

In this regard they took note of the report of the meeting on drug control cooperation in the Caribbean held in Barbados on 15 to 17 May 1996 by the United Nations Drug Control Programme and recommended the plan of action which was agreed at the meeting for implementation.

Witness protection

The heads of Government noted the growing threat to the administration of justice in the form of intimidation and elimination of witnesses. They welcomed the initiatives of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago with respect to the development of a regional witness protection programme and agreed to explore mechanisms for cooperation in this area.

Meeting of the Group of 7 (G-7)

The heads of Government noted a number of issues which had been discussed at the recently concluded G-7 Summit held at Lyon, France, on 27 to 28 June 1996. They welcomed the recognition by the G-7 that globalization poses challenges to societies and economies which may accentuate inequality and marginalization, and that the G-7 has a responsibility to spread the benefits of economic growth as widely as possible.

They also noted with satisfaction the statement of the G-7 pertaining to the importance of the integration of developing countries in the global trading system as an essential element of sustainable growth and development. In this respect, the heads of Government looked forward to the ways in which the G-7 would help developing countries, especially the least developed, to benefit more fully from the Uruguay Round. Heads of Government called on the G-7 to support the establishment of a regional development fund (RDF) as a mechanism for permitting the developing countries of the region to pursue sound economic policies, structural reform, increased productivity and enhanced competitiveness.

Debt

The heads of Government congratulated Trinidad and Tobago on writing off a substantial proportion of Guyana's bilateral debt under the Naples Terms. They welcomed the G-7 commitment to a continued Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility (ESAF) as the centrepiece of the International Monetary Fund's support for the poorest countries, and also endorsed the G-7's position regarding the proposals of the Managing Director of the Fund for greater concessionality in ESAF lending. In this respect, they expressed strong support for Guyana, as the most indebted CARICOM country, as a beneficiary of this programme, whilst urging greater debt relief for all the indebted countries of the region.

Hemispheric summit on sustainable development (December 1996, Bolivia)

The heads of Government reviewed the status of preparation for the summit on sustainable development which is scheduled to convene in Bolivia in December 1996. They endorsed the need for the summit to examine those issues that had not been fully addressed at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992, including modalities for the financing of environmental programmes. They welcomed the cooperative efforts of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the World Bank and the Organization of American States in the preparatory process. They urged the international community to honour the commitments made at UNCED and the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States.

United Nations

The heads of Government noted the developing relations between the region and the United Nations as borne out by the presence for the first time of the Secretary-General of the Caribbean Community at the meeting of heads of regional cooperation organizations convened by the Secretary-General of the United Nations. They stressed the importance which they attached to the further development of these links particularly in the context of the furtherance of the Community's development needs and its possible role in the development of peace and security particularly within the Caribbean region. They conveyed their appreciation to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, through his special representative at the meeting, for the work which the Secretary-General has done in promoting the heightened level of cooperation.

Organization of American States

The heads of Government had an exchange of views with the Secretary-General of the Organization of American States (OAS) on issues related to the reorientation of the OAS and the evolving inter-American agenda. They welcomed the commitment expressed by the Secretary-General to retain and strengthen the national offices of the OAS in the context of the new orientation of the organization towards the provision of technical cooperation; to enhance the representation of CARICOM nationals in the organization; and to advance the security concerns of small States.

The Secretary-General emphasized the desire of OAS to make the activities of the Organization directly relevant to the problems and purposes of its membership, with particular emphasis on issues related to the promotion of democracy, environment and trade.

The heads of Government also welcomed the signing of a memorandum of understanding between OAS and the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) as a further indication of the willingness of OAS to function as an instrument of integration and cooperation which directly addresses the problems of the Caribbean.

CARIFESTA VII - Saint Kitts and Nevis

The heads of Government welcomed the offer by the Government of Saint Kitts and Nevis to host CARIFESTA VII. They recognized that this offer by one of the smaller CARICOM States symbolized the importance of this festival as a concrete expression of the cultural affinity of all Caribbean peoples. They expressed the hope that CARIFESTA VII would be supported by the countries of the wider Caribbean.

Presentation of Dictionary of Caribbean English Usage

The heads of Government thanked Mr. Richard Allsopp for the presentation of copies of his Dictionary of Caribbean English Usage which represented a significant literary achievement by a noted Caribbean scholar.

Message of best wishes to Caribbean athletes

The heads of Government extended their best wishes and those of the Community to all athletes of the Caribbean region who would be participating in the Centennial Olympic Games in Atlanta in July 1996. They recognized that the athletes were ambassadors of the region who were going to Atlanta to seek glory not only for themselves but for the entire Caribbean.

Secretary-General

The heads of Government expressed their appreciation of the services of Mr. Edwin W. Carrington, Secretary-General, to the Caribbean Community and in that regard were pleased to renew his contract for another term.

Appreciation

The heads of Government expressed their gratitude to the Government and people of Barbados for having hosted their seventeenth meeting. They particularly expressed their appreciation of the fact that Barbados was hosting a second meeting of the Conference in two years, on this occasion as a result of the inability of the Government of Antigua and Barbuda to do so because of the impact of Hurricane Luis on that country. They also expressed their deep appreciation for the services rendered to the Community by Mr. Kenneth Hall, Deputy Secretary-General. They extended their best wishes to him on his assumption of the position of Principal of the Mona Campus of the University of the West Indies.

Date and venue of the eighth inter-sessional and eighteenth meetings of the Conference

The heads of Government agreed that the eighth inter-sessional meeting of the Conference would be held in Antigua and Barbuda in 1997, and the eighteenth meeting of the Conference in Jamaica in July 1997.